



U.S. Department of Justice

**Stephen J. Murphy
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277
Fax: (313) 226-3561*

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

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EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Steve Safa

DEARBORN MAN FOUND GUILTY OF PERJURY

A Dearborn man was found guilty yesterday in federal court of making a false declaration before a federal grand jury after a week-long jury trial in Detroit, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Found guilty was Mahmoud Mustapha Safa, also known as "Steve Safa," 39, of Dearborn. The jury deliberated about five hours before returning its verdict before U.S. District Judge Arthur Tarnow.

The evidence presented at trial showed that Safa testified under oath before a federal grand jury in Detroit on August 11, 2004 and that he lied in response to questions relating to a member of a contraband cigarette trafficking conspiracy. Safa was arrested on September 25, 2001 on northbound Interstate 71 in Kentucky while a passenger in a truck towing a U-Haul trailer containing 1,500 cartons of contraband cigarettes destined for Michigan.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Lying under oath in grand jury testimony prevents grand jurors from conducting their constitutionally appointed powers to determine what the truth is and whether charges should be brought, and also prevents our prosecutors from getting at the truth. We have and will continue to prosecute such cases vigorously.

"Counter-terrorism, and preventing terrorist attacks, is the number one priority of the Department of Justice. Because lying under oath in a counter-terror investigation directly

impacts our office's continuing efforts to keep our citizens safe and free, it is among the most serious crimes that we prosecute. We will never yield in our efforts to investigate and prosecute serious felonies and today's excellent verdict reinforces that commitment."

Sentencing of Safa is scheduled for January 17, 2006. Safa faces a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison and or a \$250, 000.00 fine.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney J. Michael Buckley of the Counter Terrorism Unit.